

**Summary Minutes
WATER POLICY TASK FORCE
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**

**April 14, 2005
SCAG Offices: Riverside B Meeting Room**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Margaret Clark.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the February 10, 2005 meeting were approved unanimously.

NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

New Task Force members introduced themselves: Councilmember Jon Harrison of Redlands, Mayor Sandy Baldonado of Claremont and Bill Wright, the Director liaison with the Metropolitan Water District.

4.0 PRESENTATION ITEMS FOR THE TASK FORCE

4.1 Ventura County's Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project

Jeff Pratt, Director of Ventura County's Watershed Protection District, introduced the project by noting that the Matilija Dam, built in 1947, no longer was providing much in the way of flood control protection or water supply. This owed to the accumulation of debris and sediment behind the Dam. The County is recently organized the District around watershed management, incorporating flood control with water resources management. Jeff described the hydrology of the area as the confluence of two creeks that form the Ventura River and eventually discharge into the Pacific Ocean. At the upper end of the watershed there is extensive high elevation wilderness and natural habitat. The major water purveyor is the Lake Casitas Water District. With Lake Casitas the watershed has a 250,000 acre feet reservoir. Overall, the watershed is a self-sufficient water system. Because of the steep gradient and high volumes of rainfall in the watershed it is considered a high risk watershed for flooding.

The Matilija Dam, when constructed, was expected to have a lifespan of 24-36 years, given the heavy sediment runoff in the watershed. Since its original construction it has been notched to avoid catastrophic failure. The Army Corps

of Engineers feasibility study has developed alternative approaches for removing the Dam and restoring the Matilija ecosystem. A key problem in the project is managing the accumulated sediments to avoid adverse impacts on lower parties in the watershed. Stakeholders have had a significant effect on expediting the effort and forging consensus around priorities and advancing political support. The main goals of the project include restoration of habitat, protection of endangered species, safe removal and transport of sediments, improve recreational opportunities and access and to keep stakeholders in the watershed “whole”.

Mr. Pratt described the elements of the Plan that are intended to advance the water supply, water quality, flood protection, recreational, habitat and other environmental interests of the watershed stakeholders. In the process the project stakeholders reached a consensus on strategy and sequence and priority of actions. The effort will require extensive adaptive management. Most importantly, the project has completed and approved federal and state environmental documents

Susan Hughes, also with Ventura County, then spoke about the funding issues related to this \$130 million project. The project has gained the attention of Sacramento, Washington and other countries.

Task Force discussion included references to similar issues in the Las Virgenes-Malibu Creek watershed, sediment movements and NPDES restrictions, beach restoration by moving sands and other sediment to beaches that have suffered major erosion, the interplay of beach restoration, harbor dredging impacts in Port Heuneme and the endangered Santa Clara River and the removal of exotics like arundo.

A motion was made asking the EEC to recommend to the Regional Council that it adopt the recommended resolution with an added provision that SCAG urge the passage of WRDA 2005. The motion passed unanimously.

New Task Force Member Brian Brennan, Mayor of Ventura, introduced himself.

4.2 Survey of Stormwater Management Costs

Survey of Stormwater Management Costs

Brian Currier, on the faculty at CSU Sacramento and an engineer in the Office of Water Programs, and Bo Cutter, a Task Force Member, addressed the Task Force on a recent survey of stormwater costs reported in local agencies.

Prof. Cutter reviewed several of the approaches that have been taken to measures costs: surveys of current program costs in local agencies, piecemeal cost estimates as a function of TMDL plans, and global stormwater treatment cost

estimates like those done by the Gordon study at USC. The unknown so far is the issue of what part of stormwater can be managed with source controls, what part with infiltration and what part with advanced treatment. Until the mix of these strategies is determined it is difficult to develop reliable global estimates of total program costs for stormwater management. Also, there are no generally accepted accounting guidelines that would standardize ways to account for costs in various agencies; these guidelines need to be developed by a credible cross section of local agencies.

Prof. Currier described the study he had managed under contract to the State Water Resources Control Board. The study selected six local agencies in different locations and surveyed their outlays for stormwater program costs related to their National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits in fiscal year 2003. The survey resulted in a range of \$18 to \$39 annual costs per household among these agencies. The low cost result owes to some special factors that are unique to that agency. The study had nine categories for tracking costs: Street sweeping, a source control strategy, is the largest expense category of the nine cost categories tracked by the study. Program management represents another sizeable cost category. The study was not able to clearly distinguish between existing costs and new costs that were being incurred by an agency. The most difficult part of this was determining whether program costs under NPDES regulation were “enhanced” since 1990 or were “existing” programs. In general the new annual costs in the study were about \$11 per household, leaving about \$28 per household for existing program costs. Finer points in tracking costs require distinctions between water quality costs and, say, flood control practices or public education expenses that may have multiple objectives.

Task Force questions and discussion involved the decision to limit the study to six cities, variances in Phase II implementation costs and reporting costs on a household basis.

4.3 Water Supplies and the Growth Outlook for the San Bernardino Valley and San Gorgonio Pass Watersheds

Because of the limits of time, the Task Force heard presentation by speakers from the San Bernardino Valley. These included Bob Reiter (General Manager, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District), Stacey Aldstadt (Deputy General Manager, San Bernardino City Water Department), Doug Headrick (Water System Manager, City of Redlands), Joe Zoba (General Manager, Yucaipa Valley Water District) and (a consultant with the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency). The panelists described the future growth and water supply planning that their agencies were doing in their service areas. In general the Valley is well positioned to supply water to serve this growth. The combination of natural groundwater recharge and various water treatment and recycling projects indicate that the Valley may even be able to export water to other areas of the SCAG

region. Facilities that are being developed are crucial to fulfillment of these goals.

Other invited panelists will be asked to return at the June meeting to make their presentations on the Cherry Valley, Beaumont and the San Timoteo watershed.

5.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

There was no Chair's report.

6.0 STAFF REPORT

There was no Staff report.

7.0 TASK FORCE INFORMATION SHARING

There was no time for information sharing.

8.0 COMMENT PERIOD

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m. with the announcement of June 9 as the next meeting date for the Task Force.

April 14, 2005 Attendance Summary:

Elected Members: Dennis Washburn (Chair), Sandy Baldonado, Glen Becerra, Brian Brennan, Margaret Clark, Larry Forester, Jon Harrison, Susan Lien Longville, Mike Miller, Lori Van Arsdale, Toni Young, Frank Zerunyan.

Liaison Members: Bo Cutter, Suzanne Dallman, Tom Erb, Adel Hagekhalil, Dan Lafferty, Dennis LaMoreaux, Heather Merenda, Bill Wright.

Minutes prepared and approved by Daniel E. Griset, Sr. Regional Planner and Staff to the Task Force